

### Abstract of the Invention

**[0057]** Information is provided about the histories of authors in a computer mediated persistent conversation such as a newsgroup. The information may include any or all of how long an author has been active in the group, in what other newsgroups the author participates, to what other threads of conversation the author contributes, and which other participants the author most often engages in discussion. This information may be obtained as an aggregation of data obtained from the groups or communities automatically. The information about any selected user or group is then made available or otherwise provided to any other users so that they can decide whether the selected user or group is likely to provide helpful or useful information. Also, particular message type indicators may be applied to messages when they are posted by users. The message type indicators may also be obtained as an aggregation of data obtained from the groups or communities automatically.